However, the Concurrent Evaluation of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is being carried out regularly since October, 1985. The major findings of the latest Concurrent Evaluation Report for January, 1987—September, 1987, in respect of Bihar, are as under:—

(i) As per records, 56 per cent of assisted families belonged to the destitute group (Rs. 0—Rs. 2265), 40 per cent to the very very poor group (Rs. 2266—Rs. 3500) and 4 per cent to the income group of Rs. 3501—Rs. 4800.

(ii) Only 8 per cent cases were identified by the gram sabhas.

(iii) 15 per cent old beneficiaries had crossed the poverty line of Rs .6400 and 45 per cent the income level of Rs. 3500.

(iv) In 82 per cent cases the assets were found to be intact.

(v) The assets had generated incremental income or more than Rs. 2000 in 27 per cent cases, Rs. 1001—Rs. 2000 in 22 per cent cases and Rs. 501—Rs. 4000 in 17 per cent cases.

(d) No special measures are contemplated in the implementation of poverty alleviation programme in Bihar. However, some steps have been taken to improve the operation of these programmes throughout the country (including Bihar):

(i) More wheightage has been given to incidence of poverty in the allocation of Central funds to the States under the major poverty alleviation programmes Integrated Rural Employment Programme (IRDP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP).

(ii) Greater emphasis is being laid on better planning, diversification of actvities, and marketing of finished products under IRDP.

(iii) List of works to be taken up under NREP and RLEGP has been revised to ensure creation of economically productive assets in rural areas.

(iv) States have been asked to prepare districtwise plans for maintenance of assets created under NREP AND RLEGP.

(v) Concurrent Evaluation of IRDP and NREP is already being done. It is proposed to extend the same to RLEGP during 1988-89 also.

Discussions between SAARC countries to pool expertise for drinking water

*166. SHRI KALAPNATH RAI:
SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether discussions were held recently among the countries of SAARC to pool their expertise and resources to tackle the problem of providing safe drinking water in such of the rural areas of those countries which do not so far have that provision; and

(b) if so, the results of those discussions and the details of the joint action plan, if any, drawn up in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Under the SAARC Calendar of Activities for 1988, a Seminar-cum-Workshop on Rural Water Supply was held in Kathmadu from April 3 to 5, 1988.

(b) The Seminar-cum-Workshop made several recommendations with an emphasis on the ways and means of dealing with operation and maintenance problems faced to SAARC member countries in the field of rural water supply. The member countries have not drawn any joint action plan.

Advanced U.S. AWACS for Pakistan

*167. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the United States of America is supplying more advanced AWACS to Pakistan; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) The US Government is committed in principle to supply an Airborn Early Warning system in Pakistan. No decision has been announced about the type of system to be supplied; nor about the modality and timing of the transfer.

(b) On several occasions, Government has conveted to the US Government India's serious concern at the supply of sophisticated arms to Pakistan, particularly those which act as force multipliers. Government considers that such supplies results in an unnecessary and wasteful arms race in the sub-continent and thereby highten tension in the region.

Financial aid given in LTTE leaders

*168. SHRI VISHWASRAO RAMRAO PATIL:

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a request for financial aid was made by the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) to the Government of India;

(b) whether the Government of India had handed over Rs. 50 lakhs to Shri Valupillai Prabhakaran, the leader of the LTTE;

(c) whether this amount was a part of the deal between the LTTE and the Indian Government to enable both the Governments to sign the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The amount was made available to the LTTE.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Amendment of the Haj Committee Act, 1959

*169. SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to initiate fresh legislation to Haj Committee Act, 1959;

(b) if so, wheher a sub-committee had been constituted for the purpose and whether due representation had been given to various sections of the Committee; and

(c) whether the Committee has since submitted its report to Government and whether the draft